

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing amendments is respectfully requested.

Summary of Amendments

By the foregoing amendments claim 31 is amended, claims 35-38 are cancelled and claims 51-54 are added. Accordingly, upon entry of this amendment, claims 31-34 and 39-54 will be pending in this application, with claims 31, 39, 47, 49 and 50 being independent claims.

Support for the new claims can be found throughout the present specification and the original claims.

Applicants point out that the amendment to claim 31 and the cancellation of claims 35-38 are without prejudice or disclaimer, and Applicants expressly reserve the right to prosecute the cancelled claims and claim 31 in its original, unamended form in one or more continuation and/or divisional applications.

Summary of Office Action

As an initial matter, Applicants note with appreciation that claims 39-50 are allowed and claims 35 and 38 are indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 31-34, 36 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Goppel et al., WO 03/039492 (hereafter "GOPPEL").

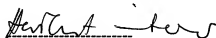
Response to Office Action

While Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's comments regarding the patentability of the subject matter of claims 31-34, 36 and 37 in view of GOPPEL set forth in the present Office Action, all of the claims submitted herewith are either allowed, depend from an allowed claim (see new claims 51-54) or are based on a claim which has been indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form (see present claim 31 and cancelled claim 38). Accordingly, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over GOPPEL is moot.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that also all of the amended and new claims in this application are in condition for allowance wherefore prompt issuance of the Notices of Allowance and Allowability is respectfully solicited. If any issues yet remain which can be resolved by a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,
Rainer KROEPKE et al.



Neil F. Greenblum
Reg. No. 28,394

October 14, 2008
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 716-1191

Heribert F. Muensterer
Reg. No. 50,417